

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph, beginning at page 8, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Referring now to the drawing, wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements throughout, Figs. 3A – 3C illustrate an exemplary introducer according to the present invention for endoluminal deployment of a stent inside of a biocompatible graft cover without obstructing endoluminal fluid flow during deployment. As shown in Figs. 3A-C, exemplary stent delivery system 40 comprises a stent sheath 42, a compressed stent 44 underlying the stent sheath, a pusher 46 underlying the stent sheath proximal to the stent, an inner core 48, and a compressed biocompatible graft 50 overlying distal, or opposite, end 52 of the stent sheath. Inner core 48 is axially mounted within inner lumen 56 of pusher 46, extends axially through stent 44 and attaches to tip 58 comprising tip sheath 60 overlying distal end 62 of the stent. Optional central guidewire lumen 49 (not shown in Fig. 3A) runs through inner core 48 and tip 58, as shown in Figs 3B and 3C. Graft 50 has a distal end 64 attached to the stent by attachment 51 distally of the sheath distal end 52. Optionally, attachment 51 may be located at or somewhat proximally of the distal end 52 of sheath 42 within sheath 42, so long as the part of graft 50 lying within sheath 42 is easily pulled or otherwise disposed distally of sheath 42 during deployment. Graft 50 further has a proximal, or connected, end 66 attached to stent sheath 42 by a releasable attachment, such as suture 68, adapted to be released during deployment of the stent. As shown in Figs. 3A-C, pusher 46 has a rounded distal end 47.

Please replace the paragraph, beginning at page 9, line 13, with the following rewritten paragraph:

To effect release of the suture 68 during deployment, pusher 46 further comprises at distal end 47 a window 76 in which is proximally mounted cutter 70, such as a sharpened hypotube, adapted for severing the suture upon movement of the pusher relative to stent sheath 42. Stent sheath 42 has a connection point, such as a pair of tie-holes 72, as shown in Fig. 3C, and a pair of radially opposite through-holes 74 at proximal end 78 of stent sheath 42. Window 76 is radially aligned with stent sheath through-holes 74 prior to and during introduction of stent delivery system 40 into the body. As shown in Fig. 3C, suture 68 is anchored at one end through tie-holes 72 and extends distally along stent sheath 42 from the tie-holes along arrow "C", pierces graft 50 one or more times along arrow "D", returns proximally along the stent sheath along arrow "E", turns radially in the direction of arrow "F"

and enters the stent sheath through one through-hole 74, extends through pusher window 76 and exits the stent sheath through the other through-hole 74, extends distally along the stent sheath along arrow "G", pierces the graft one or more times along arrow "H", extends semi-circumferentially around the stent sheath along arrow "I" (shown in dashed lines) and anchors to the tie holes or to the other end of the suture. Suture 68 may be attached by a method that follows the order described above, starting along arrow C in alphabetical order through arrow I, or in reverse order, starting in the direction opposite arrow I, and following reverse alphabetical order in the opposite direction of each arrow named above. This suture configuration reduces friction between the suture and graft during deployment because the suture is cut into two short lengths to be pulled through the graft rather than one long length of suture.